

Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT)

TROPICAL STORM ERNESTO SITUATION REPORT # 6 1500 Hours 1 September 2006

New Information in Bold Italics

SUMMARY

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management/Virginia Emergency Operations Center has increased its awareness and preparation for the possible impact of Tropical Storm Ernesto.

EXECUTIVE ACTION

EOC Activation: The Virginia Emergency Operations Center is at Response Operations condition, monitoring National Hurricane Center advisories, National Weather Service and River Forecast Center forecasts, coordinating conference calls, and producing Situation Reports. FEMA ERT-A has arrived at the VEOC. As earlier reported FEMA ERT-A is in place supporting Federal Coordinating Officer, ESF #5 Emergency Management, Logistics, Planning; ESF #14 Long-term Community Recovery and Mitigation (Preliminary Damage Assessment section), ESF #1 Transportation, ESF #3 Public Works, ESF #10 Oil and Hazardous Materials Response, Emergency Planning Liaison Officer, Joint Information Center – Public Affairs, and External Affairs.

VDEM Priorities: Provide for the health, safety, and welfare of citizens and emergency workers; coordinate and efficient and effective state response effort; manage an aggressive response to request for assistance; and, keep stakeholders and the public informed.

STATE OF EMERGENCY

Governor Timothy M. Kaine declared a state of emergency for the Commonwealth of Virginia on August 31, 2006, allowing the deployment of Virginia National Guard personnel and other assets in preparation for Tropical Storm Ernesto. The declaration instructs state agencies to take all reasonable actions necessary to protect the health and safety of Virginians. The Governor's emergency declaration authorizes state agencies to speed assistance to communities in need. It makes state resources immediately available to rescue, evacuate, shelter, and provide essential commodities in affected localities if needed.

Protective Actions:

Local Activation of EOC:

City of Richmond – 31 August @ 1300

City of Colonial Heights – 31 August @ 0600 – ***Closed 1 September @ 1130***

Henrico County – 31 August evening, partial

Fairfax County – 31 August, partial

Chesterfield County – 1 September @ 0730

Waynesboro City – 31 August @ 1600

New Kent County – 1 September @ 0700

City of Hampton – 1 September @ 0800

City of Virginia Beach – 1 September @ 0900

James City County – 1 September @ 0800

Chesterfield County – 1 September @ 0600

City of Chesapeake – 1 September @ 0800 – Closed 1 September @ 1445

York County – 1 September @ 0700

Town of Herndon – 1 September @ 0900

Loudoun County – 1 September @ 0900

City of Poquoson – 1 September @ 1000

Northumberland County – 1 September @ 1030

Stafford County – 1 September @ 0700

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Gloucester County – 1 September @ 0800
Town of Chincoteague – 1 September @ 1400
Lancaster County – 1 September @ 1200
Accomack County – 1 September @ 1200
Northampton County – 1 September @ 1400

Local State of Emergency Declared

Waynesboro City – 31 August @ 2000
York County – 1 September @ 0900
City of Poquoson – 1 September @ 0900
City of Richmond – 1 September
City of Newport News – 1 September @ 1200
Northumberland County – 1 September @ 1230
Lancaster County – 1 September @ 1200
Accomack County – 1 September @ 1200
Northampton County – 1 September @ 1400

Local Activation of Shelters:

Henrico County – 31 August @ 2000
York County/Poquoson – 1 September
City of Richmond – 1 September @ 1030 (1 shelter open, 5 occupants)
City of Hampton – 1 September @ 1130 – for Special Needs
Northumberland County – 1 September
City of Newport News – 1 September – Evacuation Center
Lancaster County – 1 September (1 shelter open, 6 occupants)
Accomack County – 1 September (1 shelter open, 6 occupants)

Adjacent Jurisdictions:

North Carolina Declared a State of Emergency
The District of Columbia Declared a State of Emergency

ESF 15 – External Affairs: Distributing press releases and fielding media inquiries. Virginia Legislators have been added to the distribution list for Situation Reports. Joint Information Center (JIC) is operational. ***Governor Kaine had a press conference at the VEOC on 1 September @ 1300.***

WEATHER FORECAST

Hazardous Weather Outlook, Friday 1 September: Radar and surface observations indicate that Ernesto has weakened and is now a tropical depression, the remnants of which will lift north across the region today and into tonight. Heavy rains associated with the storm will affect the areas of the Commonwealth along and east of Interstate 95, and flash flood watches are in effect into tonight. The threat of tornadoes will continue into this afternoon for Eastern and Southeast Virginia. Gale warnings are in effect into this evening for the Atlantic Coastal waters southern Chesapeake Bay. A wind advisory is in effect into early and a High surf advisory is in effect for coastal areas. High risk of rip currents today. Areas along and east of Interstate 95 will experience 5 – 10 inches of total rainfall. Winds inland will vary between 15 – 20 miles per hour, coastal winds will vary between 20 – 30 miles per hour with gust to Tropical Storm levels (39 miles per hour). Coastal tides 1 - 2 feet above normal are likely. High temperatures will range upper 60's to low 70's and overnight low temperatures will range from upper 50's to mid 60's.

IMPACTS: As Ernesto enters the Commonwealth after an unrelated rain event, wet soil conditions will increase the likelihood of trees falling causing power outages and blocked roads. Landslide probability in the mountainous regions of the Commonwealth is significant enough for the United States Geological Survey to have issued a landslide hazard alert. Flash Flood Warnings and River Flood Watches have been issued. ***River gauge forecast for the Blackwater River indicates major flooding, cresting at about 0800, Sunday 3 September.***

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OPERATIONS SECTION

ESF 5 – Emergency Management: Virginia is currently at *Hurricane Readiness Condition 3* and the Region 3; FEMA Liaison Representative arrived on Wednesday, 30 August. *Regional Conference Calls for localities and National Weather Service were held on, Wednesday 30 August, Thursday, 31 August, and Friday 1 September. A Conference Call with State Agencies for a briefing by the National Weather Service, Wakefield Office, was conducted on Wednesday, 30 August, Thursday, 31 August, and Friday 1 September. VDEM has also participated in Conference Call involving the State of Maryland, FEMA National, FEMA Region III, United States Coast Guard and others. On Saturday 2 September Regional Conference Calls for localities are scheduled as follows: VDEM Regions 1 and 5 – 1000 hours; VDEM Regions 2, 3 and 7 – 1045 hours; VDEM Regions 4 and 6 – 1130 hours.*

STATE WARNING POINT: Monitoring National Hurricane Center and local National Weather Service advisories.

LOCAL LIAISON: Standing by to assist localities as requested. VEOC received one request for Water Buffalos from Hanover County on 31 August at 17:45.

EMERGENCY SERVICES BRANCH

ESF 8 – Public Health & Medical Services: 11 personnel from VA-1 Disaster Medical Assistance Team, Norfolk VA, deployed to Atlanta, GA and 21 have been placed on standby by FEMA/NDMS. *Riverside Regional Medical Center is currently operating on backup generator. Mary Immaculate Hospital and the Newport News Health Department have no power.*

ESF 9 – Search & Rescue: VA Task Force 1, Fairfax County, and VA Task Force 2, VA Beach, deployed Type-III teams to Jacksonville, Florida in support of Tropical Storm Ernesto by FEMA. Virginia Wing of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) has been placed on alert status by VDEM Search and Rescue Coordinator. VA Task Force 1, Fairfax County, returned to base and Task Force 2, Virginia Beach, is scheduled to arrive at base 1700, 31 August. State Police Swift water Rescue Teams are pre-positioned: Team 1 will pre-deploy to the Emporia area (National Weather Service is predicting a probable flood event along the Dan River); and Team 2 will stage in Richmond. Salem City will have a 4 person swift water team available effective @ 2300 on 31 August. *1 CAP aircraft equipped with Satellite Digital Imagery System (SDIS) will be deployed 2 September.*

INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT BRANCH

ESF 1 – Transportation: VA Department of Transportation has completed preparations in accordance with Hurricane Readiness Condition 3. *VDOT reports portions of 4 interstates, 4 primary roads, and 36 secondary roads are closed due to flooding or washout. Hampton Roads/I-664/Monitor Merrimac Memorial Bridge under high wind restrictions and has imposed a 35 MPH speed restriction. The Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel has imposed level 3 restrictions: no motorcycles, no 6 wheel vehicles less than 15,000 pounds, no tractor trailers less than 30,000 pounds, and no RVs. VDOT has temporarily suspended ferry service at the Jamestown-Scotland Ferry beginning at 0900. Amtrak cancelled passenger and auto train service south of DC. CSX service along NC coastline stopped until storm passes. U.S. Coast Guard Section Hampton Roads reports that the Captain of the Port has, as of 900 hours, 30 August set Port Condition WHISKEY (gale force winds possible within the next 72 hours) for Tropical Storm Ernesto. The Port of Hampton Roads closed 1 September at 0910 and reopened on the same day at 1500 to all vessel traffic and commercial activities.* However, all mariners are advised to exercise extra precautions as the port can expect strong east to northeast winds through Friday 1 September.

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ESF 3 – Public Works: *US Army Corps of Engineers reports that all locks and bridges are okay and all canal water levels are normal.*

ESF 12 – Energy: *Virginia Dominion Power reports 285,034 customers without power as of 1330, 1 September. Electric Cooperatives report 2,859 customers without power as of 1330, 1 September.*

ESF 13 – Public Safety: *VA National Guard is prepositioned for local evacuation in the Hampton Roads, Richmond and Shenandoah Valley areas. Virginia State Police reports one storm related fatality.*

LOGISTICS SECTION

ESF 7 – Resource Support: Standing by to coordinate federal identification and establishment of Mobilization Center and Staging Areas for commodities. FEMA has pre-positioned 90 trailers in VA and 20 more are projected to arrive on 31 August and 1 September. VDEM is mapping potential points of distribution and awaiting input from localities. VDEM has 531 generators, ranging from 20 KW to 1500 KW; 301 pumps ranging from 4" to 16"; and 45 tractor trailer loads of water available in addition to various other commodities from state contractors. 2,400,000 heater meals are available.

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